

In Hawaii, I have visited dozens of schools and STEM teachers who are working day in, day out to inspire the next generation of leaders. These teachers engage their students through innovative programs like Waianae High School's Searider Productions and robotics initiatives, where our students compete successfully across our islands, nationally, and internationally.

The Hawaii Department of Education's winning Race-to-the-Top plan outlines efforts to increase students' access to highly qualified teachers in STEM and other hard-to-staff subjects. This bill can help supplement Hawaii DOE's efforts.

For his work on this bill in past congresses, I thank my former colleague Congressman Vern Ehlers, Republican of Michigan. Although he retired from his role as a legislator in December 2010, I look forward to his continued contributions as a nuclear physics professor. Thank you also to the other members of the Congressional STEM Education Caucus for their partnership in this and other initiatives to promote STEM Education.

**MERCER ISLAND HIGH SCHOOL
MARCHING BAND**

HON. DAVID G. REICHERT

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 12, 2011

Mr. REICHERT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of an outstanding marching band in my district—the Eighth District of Washington—that recently returned from a once-in-a-lifetime trip to London to perform in the invitation-only New Year's Day Parade there. It isn't the first time the band has performed on a grand scale and to a grand audience and it most certainly won't be the last.

The Mercer Island High School marching band, composed of approximately 200 young people, returned from their whirlwind trip to London just a few days ago. And although the winter storms slowed down 87 of the band's members, Mr. Speaker, their performance went off without a hitch. They marched from Trafalgar Square to Big Ben and on to the steps of Parliament. The bells of Westminster Abbey sounded out and the entire experience was, as their director Parker Bixby put it, "surreal."

One of the more notable things about the Mercer Island High School marching band's trip to London, Mr. Speaker, is that this is not the first time the band has performed at such a prestigious event. In 1996, the band performed at the Tournament of Roses Parade in Pasadena and played there again in 2006. What's more, the band will return to Pasadena for the Parade next year, as well. The band's engagements are well documented and internationally known.

The community of Mercer Island, with a population of 22,890, is remarkably supportive of the arts. The City's Arts Council, the Rotary Club, the Schools Foundation, other community groups, and many individuals comprise a community dedicated to young musicians and artists. It is indeed a testament to the community, Mr. Speaker, that the trip to London was even possible. Raising money is never easy, especially in our economic climate. However, the people of Mercer Island generously gave to help make the dream trip a reality.

Mr. Speaker, I want to congratulate director Bixby for his tireless efforts, Mercer Island Superintendent Gary Plano for his support, Mayor Jim Pearman and the City Council for their support, and the people of Mercer Island for their generosity. Above all, I would like to thank the members of the band for working every day to create a product that is respected and admired around the world.

**NEWTON HOUSING AUTHORITY
HONORS JONATHAN HACKER**

HON. BARNEY FRANK

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 12, 2011

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, after 39 years of dedicated service in the important cause of providing housing for people in need in our society, Jonathan Hacker is retiring next month as Director of the Newton Housing Authority.

Throughout the period when many in this country mistakenly put excessive focus on pushing homeownership for lower-income people in cases where it was not appropriate, Jonathan Hacker worked tirelessly on behalf of providing decent rental housing for people in that category. As he noted recently, "When I first assumed my position at NHA, our housing portfolio consisted of 226 units of federal public housing located in 4 developments along with 223 units of subsidized housing. Today, the NHA portfolio consists of 1,034 units of affordable housing operated under federal, state, and management portfolios." This feat—more than doubling the number of rental units available—is a rare example, unfortunately, of work by someone who understands the best way in which to respond to housing needs.

Public housing has not been a fashionable cause for many years, and our society has suffered from that. Jonathan Hacker was never deterred by these attitudes from working hard on behalf of people in need, and not just people in that sector but the entire City of Newton benefitted greatly from his work. As NHA Chair Tom Turner said in the announcement of Mr. Hacker's retirement, "Jonathan will be greatly missed. He has an amazing background and work ethic as well as 39 years of housing authority experience."

Mr. Speaker, in the hopes that Jonathan Hacker's example will inspire others to work as he has on the best solution to our housing needs, I ask that the statement from the Newton Housing Authority on his retirement be printed here.

**JONATHAN HACKER, NEWTON HOUSING
AUTHORITY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TO RETIRE**

Jonathan L. Hacker, Executive Director of the Newton Housing Authority has announced his intention to retire in February after 39 years with the Authority.

Mr. Hacker began his career with the NHA in 1972 as Administrative Assistant. He was elevated to Assistant Executive Director in 1983 and to Executive Director in 1999.

When asked to reflect upon his career he stated, "When I first assumed my position at NHA, our housing portfolio consisted of 226 units of federal public housing located in 4 developments along with 223 units of subsidized housing. Today, the NHA portfolio consists of 1,034 units of affordable housing

operated under federal, state, and management portfolios. New housing opportunities have always been difficult to obtain in Newton due to factors that we are all familiar with. Our accomplishments have been extraordinary.

"We have received over 7.5 million dollars since 1992 for capital improvement funding from HUD to renovate and support our federally funded portfolio. Some of the work items include Section 504 handicap modifications at our developments, replacement heating plants, replacement windows, roofs, kitchen and bath modernizations, new fire alarm systems, balcony and canopy repairs, an emergency fire stopping project, and other improvements that make the lives of our residents easier and safer. During the initial years of the federal capital improvement program, these grants were competitive in nature. Our competitive proposals generated HUD grants in excess of 4 million dollars.

"On the State side, funds have been more difficult to come by. However, we managed to accomplish a one million dollar building envelope project, an emergency generator project which provides emergency electricity to our disabled residents at the New Hyde apartments, a replacement window program, building re-siding project, electric baseboard replacement project, drainage and surface improvements to the New Hyde site and have additional projects currently in the planning and design stage. State funded projects that are presently in the process of being federalized (Echo Ridge and Nonantum Village) are receiving significant infusions of funds, which will improve the infrastructure of these properties and enhance the lives of our residents.

"Our real property acquisition program has been amazingly successful, recently yielding 48 units of affordable housing with local inclusionary zoning funding, Community Preservation Act participation, and conventional bank financing. The Newton Housing Authority with the Commissioner's support elected to receive 6 million dollars in cash payments from developers of two luxury developments which would have otherwise provided 9 units of family housing for a finite period of time. Our election to receive cash has created appropriate sized housing conveniently located close to public amenities, which will remain affordable in perpetuity. NHA has demonstrated that it is the low cost producer of affordable housing acquisition in our city. This program creates the quickest path to creating permanently affordable housing.

"On other fronts, great accomplishment and personal satisfaction has come from our actions on behalf of victims of Hurricane Katrina, bringing Habitat for Humanity to Newton, devising an emergency management and evacuation plan for our residents, implementing and upgrading our Information Technology systems, dedicating units in our Wyman Street property for temporary emergency housing, federalizing two state funded developments, being named by HUD as a High Performing Housing Authority on multiple occasions, and being honored in November 1999 when HUD Secretary Andrew Cuomo named us as '... the nation's finest ...' in a Washington, D.C. awards ceremony. We were instrumental in gaining the necessary support from the Nonantum community to allow Nonantum Village Place, a HUD 202 development to become a reality. We have had numerous financial audits including the recently completed FY 2009 A-133 audit which have all been without finding or recommendations.

"We provided much comfort to Mr. Bill Britt, the 'Hermit from Chestnut Hill'. He along with a number of truly homeless individuals residing outdoors received our care